

## Alabama House of Representatives

District 103  
Mobile County Alabama  
465 Dexter Avenue  
Mobile, AL 36604

TO: Federal Communications Commission

FROM: Representative Joseph Mitchell, Member  
Alabama House of Representatives  
State of Alabama  
11 S. Union Street  
Montgomery, Alabama 36130

RE: Proceeding Number 06-121  
Media Conglomerates Control of Media Outlets

Speaking on the behalf of historically disenfranchised communities in Mobile County please be advised that the impact of conglomerate acquisitions in this South Alabama community is significant. Currently, Clear Channel and Cumulus Broadcasting own and control most of the FM. They have initiatives on going to further extend into any strong AM base.

Our concern is that there are no information and news alternatives for citizens in this community. "An uninformed citizenry is an endangered citizenry!" The conglomerates use a "cookie cutter" approach to programming. Radio station programming that is targeted to urban African American listening audiences have absolutely no new and information broadcasts. On these stations there are rarely even weather reports, aside for forecasts secondary to athletic events. Occasionally the stations will break for "the test" but that is it. Programmed music, no news and information – fertile ground for the promotion of ignorance, complacency and civic stagnation. There is no competition so the station ownership has no need to engage in out-reach. This also means that the conglomerate owners do not have to "listen" to the public regarding questionable program content, "Freedom of Speech" and artistic expression not withstanding.

Radio and television are businesses. Historically disenfranchised communities, urban and rural, have no comparable means to a mechanism that informs and educates their populace regarding local, regional, nation or international matters of importance. Issues of community health, economics, education, weather and the "common good" are no longer available to us. The 'business' of radio and television as entertainment negates the community's access to 'service.' The conglomerates provide only token services through presentations of gospel and religious programs. Information, investigative reports and topics of inquiry on local, state, regional or even national import are all but non-existent. [Note: National Public Radio (NPR) in this community caters to affluent, Eurocentric populations. The Twin Towers event, The War in Iraq, and other substantive issues are seldom topics of discussion and typical NPR 'columns' are not "afforded" by the management of this private, non-profit. Issues and programs of a multicultural nature are only prominent in programming as the station approached its annual fund raising season.]

In the larger scheme of things, the working poor, urban and rural communities do not have a voice in nor through the conglomerates. This lack of information endangers the total community of this nation.

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